

# TALON





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## On the Cover

Sergeant Greg McDowell (left) and Private First Class Leon Babkhan direct tactical maneuvers from the turret of their M-1 Abrams tank as they advance down range to engage targets on the British-run firing range in MND (SW). (Photo by Private First Class Joel Miller, 55th Signal Company, Combat Camera, see pages 6 and 7).

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The Task Force Eagle web site will offer breaking news as it happens on its new web site. Messages to Task Force Eagle soldiers as well as information for soldiers is available. The Talon On-line is updated every Saturday. Webmaster: Sergeant Robert R. Ramon. Contact us at: The Public Affairs Office, Eagle Base, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina APO AE 09789, Telephone MSE 551-5230, Sprint 762-5233.

## Up Front

By Command Sergeant Major  
Carl E. Christian  
Task Force Eagle CSM

As soldiers work together day after day, too often they become passive, or fail to render proper customs and courtesies. We have all been taught the proper military protocol, yet day-in and day-out, we sometimes inadvertently neglect to give proper recognition to each other in the form of a greeting and salute.

Soldiers sometimes fail to render greetings and a salute, perhaps due to repetition, and officers sometimes do not return the salute and greeting when it is given. Again, this could be attributed to repetition, but, regardless of the reason, it is not the proper conduct of a soldier.

We should all keep the following in mind about customs and courtesies: *Military customs are habits, procedures, traditions and even lore that has been passed down from generation to generation. Courtesies are traits of kindness, friendliness, thoughtfulness or consideration of others.*

Military customs and courtesies are about acknowledgment and respect for the rank and position of an individual. It is the duty of all soldiers to ensure that we set an example by adhering to these customs and courtesies. As leaders, we need to reinforce this tradition and instill in everyone that we are all charged with making tactful on-the-spot corrections to ensure this age old army tradition is adhered.

We all must be mindful that we are representing the United States of America in this peacekeeping operation, along with other NATO countries. Given this, we need to be aware that we cannot expect others to show respect and admiration for our country if we do not display it amongst ourselves. Respect shown is respect given, and we need to all make a conscientious effort to lead by example... and remember, **"TODAY IS THE BEST DAY TO BE A SOLDIER."**



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# DTACs keep commanders on line

## Experience the main factor in DTAC success

Story by Sergeant Terry L. Welch  
345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Photo by Private First Class Joel Miller  
55th Signal Co., Combat Camera

A satellite phone buzzed impatiently, and as Sergeant Charles Hamilton moved to answer it, the secure radio beside him crackled to life. "Iron TAC, Iron Main, over." Master Sergeant David Pierce snatched the handset from the desktop. "Iron TAC," he answered.

At the other end of the small space, Maj. James Oxley and Sergeant Major Wayne Reason pointed at a map on the wall. "What I need to know," Oxley tells Reason, turning away from the map, "is who will be coordinating the MEDEVAC choppers? We don't need every chopper flying if something goes wrong."

Sergeant First Class John Vernon sat at a table, writing on piece of paper. He raised his head as Hamilton put down the phone and said, "All sensitive items green." "Check."

This was the scene last week at the 1st Armored Division's Tactical Action Center supporting Exercise "Dynamic Response '98" near the firing range at Glamoc, Bosnia Herzegovina.

To find out what it was all about, consult the "Iron DTAC" Standard Operating Procedures Manual: **"The DTAC is deployed to be in a position on the battlefield to manage and control those divisional forces that are committed to close combat with an enemy force."**

"We are forward of the commander and help him communicate with his troops doing the fighting," said Vernon.

The TAC, according to Vernon and others working inside the expandable truck, is more than just a conduit, however. It is a clearinghouse of information and experience. If problems are easily solved at the TAC level, often smaller issues needn't bother the commander. "In a TAC," Vernon said, "You'll have almost entirely senior enlisted soldiers and officers. A lot of knowledge goes into a TAC, so when you get a kill on one, you've

put a real hurtin' on someone."

"Yeah, you put all your smart guys forward," Pierce quipped.

Captain William Zemp, operations officer for 1st Armored Division Artillery, said that commanders will have a TAC on the ground near the battle, and the people who run them are almost always handpicked. "There's a lot of planning on who goes into the TAC. It's not a set thing, because different jobs require different people," Zemp said.



Captain William Zemp uses the satellite communications link to discuss the arrival of an armored vehicle.

Aside from maintaining communications within and without the TAC, it has to be mobile. Zemp said this requires that a TAC carry only the most essential items. "Rommel controlled a multi-lingual, multi-national force from the back of a jeep. It's better for me to run (the artillery) TAC out of my Humvee until I become stationary."

The most complicated task of the TAC soldiers is just keeping track of who is where. Every asset the commander of a battle has must be accounted for in the TAC.

Zemp said that without a TAC, it would be hard for commanders to lead effectively. "We're out here to act as a buffer for subordinate units, basically. We keep track of them, we help get the problems solved, we let the commanders command."

# ***UK supports Dynamic Response***



**Second Lieutenant Jeremy Toze (left) and Corporal Dave Leask check communications via a tactical satellite at the Multinational Division Southwest Tactical Command Post.**

**Story and photos by Corporal James E. Baker**  
*345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.*

**A**rmed forces from England, Canada, and Australia comprise the United Kingdom's multinational division southwest, based at Banja Luka, Bosnia.

The British contingent temporarily moved its tactical command post down to Glamoc for "Dynamic Response '98" to assist the 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit in staging the training exercise.

In addition to providing communications back to Banja Luka, and helping the U.S. Marines administratively, the U.K.'s tactical command post also served as the administrative center for its battle groups throughout the Bosnia Theater.

Their assistance to the exercise became apparent during the April 3 live fire demonstration attended by SFOR, NATO, and Bosnian dignitaries. The British provided the old Warsaw Pact vehicles that were demolished in a magnificent display of military might.

"What proved to be the most challenging was getting the hard targets that had to be purchased," said Major Paul Fredenburg, the "Dynamic Response '98" chief of operations. "Also, this affair (the exercise) required major coordination with the Marines, who were at a distance, 10 government agencies, and chains of command from the participating armed forces."

The cooperation of the respective nations came together as the display of camaraderie extended forth from the British area for this exercise.

There were brass-covered artillery shells at the entrance to the carpeted media tent where a British Royal Guard stood dressed in a uniform similar to that of Buckingham Palace.

The impression was in keeping with the British flair for ceremony, including Scottish bagpipes ringing out the "Ballad of the Green Berets." When the live fire demonstration ended, a British voice announced the departure chucks for the press and VIPs who had arrived via helicopter.

"All in all, I'd have say it was a good show on everyone's part," said Captain Andrew Percival, of the 19th Mechanized Brigade.



**British sentry, Private Martin Walker controls the entrance to the Multinational Division Southwest Tactical Command Post.**



# *Things are cooking on Mount Vis*

## **MP Company works on specialty cuisines**

Story and photo by Sergeant Oreta M. Spencer  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**T**he smell of fresh baked chocolate chip cookies fills the air. Taste buds tingle and mouths water. Where can a soldier go to enjoy this food?

Grandma's house? Not quite, but the same home cooked taste is here at Mount Vis—the only place in Bosnia-Herzegovina that has a dining facility run by Army food service soldiers.

Cooks from the 630th Military Police Company from Bamberg, Germany, are here performing their second tour in Bosnia.

"We came here in December 1995, when it was called IFOR, and stayed until November 1996," said Staff Sergeant Patrick Walker, 29, of Detroit, Mich.

"Now we are back for SFOR in support of Operation Joint Guard," said Walker.

Although Mount Vis is a remote site located to the west of Camp Dobol, the quality, quantity and variety of food is not

affected by its location.

"Everything we can prepare in garrison, we can prepare here," Walker said.

"Soldiers know what soldiers like, so we try to offer a variety of nice, healthy dinners like you would have at home," said Walker.

Walker said that to increase the morale of the 40 to 45 soldiers assigned to Mount Vis, the cooks will have specialty days.

"We are working on having a Seafood Day, a Spanish Day and even a Soul Food Day in order to add variety to day-to-day operations," Walker said. "With our capabilities and know-how, we can cook anything! Our goal is to satisfy the soldiers with an appetizing dinner."

Also, Walker proudly explained that the 630th Military Police Company has placed in both the U.S. Army Europe and 5th Corps Philip A. Connelly awards.

With the scent of fresh baked pastries and deserts filling the air, the scent of home is not far away from the dining facility on Mount Vis.



Staff Sergeant Patrick Walker (left) instructs Private First Class John Cambian Jr. on the evening meal preparations.

# 1st Armored Division demons Tank crews on track at Exercise Dynamic

Story by Sergeant Terry L. Welch  
345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

Sergeant Derry Brown, Preston, Conn., said, "It makes the whole thing worth it," about finally getting to fire High Explosive Anti-Tank rounds during Exercise Dynamic Response '98. As a gunner on an M1A1 Abrams tank, in Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Armor, Brown hadn't gotten the chance to fire a HEAT round in the three years he's been an Army 19Kilo, or tank crewman. He said he wanted to "see the effect."

Usually the tank crewmen only get to fire non-explosive rounds, duds basically, that can be used to show how accurate the tankers are firing. These rounds end their arcs with an unsatisfying thud.

During Dynamic Response '98, they got to show not only how accurately they shoot, but also what actually happens when they're required to do so.

Private first class Leon Babakhan, of Newton, Mass., has only been in the army 19 months, but the 20-year-old says it's the "opportunity of a lifetime" to see a service round fire. "It's the closest (many of us) have ever been to combat," he said.

The "handpicked crew" of the company commander's tank

were assigned to represent the display tank for the distinguished visitors during the exercise. They were handpicked to represent the display as well because of the same reasons they were chosen to be on the commander's tank: their knowledge and the assistance they can provide to the commander, thereby freeing the commander to command the company as a whole.

Sergeant Myron Kennedy, a Gilett, Ark., native, is a gunner on the commander's tank and said after six years as a tank crewman he can't imagine doing anything else. "When I was coming in the army I saw a video of a tank jumping and knew that was me," Kennedy said.

According to Kennedy, gunners have to be capable of loading and firing a round in seven seconds once the order is given.

Specialist Bruce Franklin, Shreveport, La., is a big part of Kennedy's ability to do his job effectively. As a loader, he actually puts the rounds into the tube in preparation of their being fired. He said there's nothing like shooting the tank's big gun. "That's adrenaline, boy," Franklin said. "That's my main thing, loading up and getting a kill. By the time the cease fire order is given I've usually loaded another round."

Franklin, Kennedy and Private first class James Coffey (the tank's driver) work for Staff Sergeant Michael Summers,



Photo by Private First Class Joel Miller, 55th Sig. Co., Combat Camera

The mountain range of the Resolute Barbara multi-echelon firing range stretches out in the background as Staff Sergeant Terry Wade (left) and Private First Class Kevin Mai put their M1 through its paces.



Photo by Private First Class

2nd Lieutenant Brian H. Hallam (left) observe the action from the turret of Dynamic Response.



# strates firepower

## Response

the tank commander. His job consists of commanding the tank's moving and firing, and making sure the soldiers that work for him get trained in each other's specialties. The normal progression of authority usually requires that tankers serve as drivers, then loaders, then gunners and then tank commanders.

Knowledge is not enough, however. Summers said that a soldier has to have a level head on his shoulders in order to command a tank. "It's a lot of responsibility. Everything's going at once: people are talking to you, the radio's going, you're talking to fire command, scouts are reporting," Summers shook his head, seemingly unable to convey the position's complexity. "In the end, I give the command to fire and this tank fires. That's my job."

If the crew of a tank has a friend, it's the tank itself. The M1A1 is fast, maneuverable and amazingly accurate.

Containing the latest in laser aiming technology, the tank gunner has only to sight at a target and push a button – whether the target's moving, the tank's moving, or both – and a computer will slue, and raise the tank's barrel in order to account for movement and distance.

"It's user friendly," Summers said.



*Photo by Private First Class Joel Miller, 55th Sig. Co., Combat Camera*

**2LT Brian Hallam, 1st Platoon leader, Company A, 1st Battalion, 35th Armor, discusses tank movements with his driver.**



*Private First Class Joel Miller, 55th Sig. Co., Combat Camera*  
**and Staff Sergeant Michael Summers**  
**an M-1 Abrams tank during Exercise**



*Photo by Sergeant Terry L. Welch, 345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.*

**An M-1 Abrams tank fires a round down range at armored targets during Exercise Dynamic Response.**

# Fire support team pinpoints targets



**Forward Observer, Specialist Michael Guanella monitors a field artillery firing mission.**

**Story and photos by Corporal James E. Baker**  
*345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.*

**D**uring the April 3 live fire demonstration of "Dynamic Response'98", the spectators in the stands witnessed an awesome display of firepower that was punctuated by the thunderous explosions of artillery shells. The forward observers called in these volleys to the targets and viewed and adjusted the artillery firing missions when necessary.

The forward observer is part of a small fire support team (FIST) that varies in size dependent upon the type of unit. For a field artillery battery, the size will vary according to the operation order.

Headquarters, Headquarters Battery, 4th Battalion, 27th Field Artillery Regiment, based in Baumholder, Germany, and deployed to Bosnia at Camp Bedrock, comprised the FIST team for the 2nd platoon of Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Field Artillery Regiment, during the exercise.

The 6-man team came together specifically for this exercise under the direction of a task force. Their objective was not only to support this exercise but also to gain experience, three of the soldiers are in their first enlistment tour.

"This training exercise is a learning experience because it points out the similarities and differences between the forces here, as well as our strengths and weaknesses among the various units," said Private First Class Joseph Stancook, of Rantoul, Ill., the FIST vehicle driver.

Forward observers have a ground vehicular

laser locator designator (GVLLD) to adjust fire and a global positioning system (GPS) to locate enemy positions. The casualty rate is high for forward observers in a combat environment. Many adopt a confident attitude, which is typified by one of the FIST team members at "Dynamic Response '98."

"You've got to figure that if I can see them they can see me," said Private Kevin Sharp, of Burkesville, Kentucky, the radio transmission operator of the team. "In my MOS, we don't think about the danger involved, but in accomplishing the mission of getting the rounds down range accurately," Typically, the observers would survey a target area, call for fire, and call for adjustment to fire.

The fire support noncommissioned officer of the team, Staff Sergeant Kenneth Lambert, of Boston, Mass., has had the opportunity to train with units of other countries as well as with other service branches during his six and a half-year career.

"I have had the opportunity to work in this type of environment, where much patience and coordination of effort is required," said Lambert. "I spent time in Hohenfels with troops from other nations. And, I've worked with the Marines before when I was stationed at Fort Drum, N.Y."

The successful team results come from the soldiers who dedicate themselves to their profession. What they may lack in numbers, they make up in unity, desire and purpose.



**Captain Dennis C. Burke (right) points out the anticipated impact area of an artillery shell to the Fire Support NCO, Staff Sergeant Kenneth Lambert.**



# High octane motivation at the fuel point

Story and Photos by Specialist Robin M. Sampson  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**P**umped up enthusiasm keeps the soldiers at the Eagle Base fuel point high on their jobs. "We keep motivated," Specialist Shatana McKnight, a petroleum supply specialist with Headquarters Supply Company, 127th Aviation Support Battalion, said. "It's a long day, but we just keep the motivation up."

Soldiers in the 127th ASB, from Hanua, Germany, work six-hour shifts about three times a week. While one soldier pumps the fuel, the other regulates the pressure from the fuel truck.

At the fuel point the soldiers are constantly busy providing fuel for all the vehicles at Eagle Base. When they are not at the fuel point, they are working at the airfield, refueling aircraft.

"We work long, we work hard, we work strong," Private First Class Lola Sewell, 24, of El Paso, Texas, said. "We know this is what we have to do, so we just go ahead and knock it out."

The motivation fueling the soldiers starts with a good attitude and camaraderie among them. "It's the people you work with that make the job fun," McKnight, 21, of Columbia, S.C. said. "You come out here and work with another soldier and you can really spark a friendship."

Besides developing friendships, the work closely together on the importance of job procedures.

These procedures include guiding the vehicles onto the tarp, and instructing the drivers through the fueling process.

"Even the simplest instructions are important," Private First Class Aisha Armstead, 20, of Camden, N.J., said. "If the

instructions are followed, everything goes smoothly."

The standard operating procedures for the fuel point ensure safety and guarantee environmental efforts are maintained. Soldiers must wear the proper uniform when pumping fuel. That includes a road guard vest, goggles and gloves to protect the soldier. Exceptions are made for the boots. Highly shined boots can be difficult to maintain when you are a petroleum supply specialist. Armstead and Sewell agreed, "Fuel can really put a dull finish on your boots!"

A lot of people take their work home, but for these soldiers, it isn't by choice. Smelling like fuel goes along with the job. "I smell it so much, that when it's on me, I don't even know," Sewell said. "Someone will tell me I smell like fuel."

With a smile, McKnight explains how she fights the smell of fuel. "I keep Baby Wipes with me every day," McKnight said. "I probably keep the company in business!"

Although the job of a petroleum supply specialist is not glamorous, it provides a crucial service. Without fuel, there is no convoy. "I feel like we have a really big responsibility," Sewell said.

The soldiers get right to work when vehicles roll up to the fuel point. When there's a free moment from thirsty vehicles, the soldiers sweep and sprinkle gravel on any spillage. A six-hour shift of pumping fuel requires a lot of enthusiasm and a friendly disposition.

"When you have a job like pumping fuel, you have to make the best out of it and you make some good friends in the process," Sewell said.



Specialist Shatana McKnight sweeps gravel over the drips of fuel on the tarp.



Private First Class Aisha Armstead performs her job as a petroleum supply specialist.

# Bedrock opens gates for children

## Bosnian students take tour of Camp Bedrock

Story and photo by Sergeant Gary Hicks  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

"I need volunteers."

Those are **not** the most welcome words a soldier can hear, but for Private First Class Jimmy Creech, 19, they were music to his ears. His supervisor, Staff Sergeant Frank Jamez, of Des Moines, Iowa, needed soldiers to escort children from a school in Visca around Camp Bedrock Sunday, March 30. "I jumped at the opportunity, because I love working with kids," said Creech.

He, and approximately 40 other soldiers, sponsored the group of 5th graders on a tour of Bedrock. The children toured a static display of vehicles and watched an attack dog demonstration.

After lunch at the dining facility, they enjoyed a few games of volleyball with their hosts.

"The kids really enjoyed climbing on and looking at the vehicles, but I enjoyed playing sports with them the most," said Creech of Company B, 47th Forward Support Battalion.

"I think that it gave them a better understanding of us, not just the armed troops they see driving by everyday," explained Creech, from Hazlehurst, Ga.

According to a staff officer, Task Force 2 - 6 commander, Michael R. Martinez came up with the idea of local school children visiting the camp so that they could become better acquainted with us and give the soldiers a chance to interact with the children.

The event went so well, Task Force 2 - 6 plans to hold the event monthly. So, when you hear the words – "I need volunteers" – step forward. They might give you an opportunity for new experiences that will last a lifetime.



Private First Class Jimmy Creech opens the gunners hatch in a Humvee so Enida Mesic and Dragica Putica may look out.



# Opinions of U.S. presence in Bosnia

## Tuzla citizens speak out during street interview

Story and photos by Corporal Martha Louise Reyna  
345th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**T**he coalition forces have been in Bosnia-Herzegovina for the past three years maintaining a peaceful environment for the country's efforts to stabilize itself. What impact has the presence and visibility of the NATO forces had on the people here?

The fighting has ceased between the warring factions, and rebuilding and resettlement is beginning to move forward. The economy has begun to stabilize and there seems to be a bearing

of normalcy in the daily activities of the people.

As long as the coalition soldiers are in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the peace remains. What is the perception of the people here to the presence of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) soldiers, and how long does the average citizen think they should they remain in Bosnia?

These were the questions posed to local citizens through Mirela Zunic, 1st Armored Division Public Affairs Office interpreter, on a recent trip by the 345th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment to downtown Tuzla.



**Azem Poljic:** "In addition to the Dayton Peace Accord, thanks go to the SFOR troops, they have helped keep the peace. The SFOR troops should stay until the ones who are responsible for making a decision in forming a united Bosnia-Herzegovina make a decision. The political situation is complex in our country, it will take a long time for the current political issues to find a solution."



**Nihad Salihovic:** "The soldiers should stay, that is the only solution to keep the peace. They need to stay as long as it takes to find a solution to solve the problems of this country."



**Almasa Hadjic:** "The troops are welcomed to our country. They should stay as long as the people of Bosnia needs them. We now live in peace and I feel the presence of the soldiers is a symbol of safety."

# *Dobol puts security in the bag*

## Down to earth approach to force protection

Story and photos by Staff Sergeant Jack McNeely  
196th Mobile Public Affairs Det.

**H**ow many sandbags does it take to fill the back of an M978 Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT)? This may sound like a slice of trivial humor, but it was no laughing matter for troops at Camp Dobol Monday, March 30, as they sweated in the afternoon sun during Force Protection Day.

"We take this very seriously," said Staff Sergeant Dean Sturch, a member of Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Infantry from Baumholder, Germany.

"This is infantry work."

"This is actually one of our missions — building firing positions ... filling sandbags," added the 29-year-old North Carolina native.

According to Sturch, members of Charlie 2-6, filled three HEMTTs with nearly 3,000 sandbags during the monthly Force Protection Day at Dobol. The 50-pound sandbags were used to fortify a newly constructed, wood-framed bunker adjacent Dobol's Tactical Operations Center (TOC).

According to Captain Scot Stine, mayor of Camp Dobol, each of the camp's 16 bunkers received a hefty supply of new sandbags during Force Protection Day. Also, concertina wire

was strategically placed along the southern border of the camp, which is located in the heart of the four-kilometer-wide Zone of Separation.

Camp Dobol is now home to nearly 800 U.S. troops, he noted. Add nearly 200 Brown & Root employees and Dobol becomes a mini-municipality with a population of approximately 1,000.

"Force Protection Day is a physical representation of the love we have for the troops. We want to protect them," Stine said as he observed the sandbag crews that looked like ants frantically disassembling an anthill. Many of the troops unbloused to sweat-stained T-shirts in the 70-degree temperature.

Actually, it was estimated that it takes nearly 900 sandbags to fill a HEMTT. But Private Eric Keeney and Specialist Daniel Akens, both of Charlie 2-6, put those amounts into perspective.

"It's a whole lot," Keeney shouted as he lifted the heavy sand-filled bags up to Akens atop the large hauling Army vehicle. "Too many," Akens interjected as he arranged the sandbags in the back of the HEMTT.

Meanwhile, Sturch, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the sandbag operation, praised his men for their efforts. "They used teamwork here today. That enabled them to complete their mission ahead of schedule."



Specialist Daniel Akens tosses a sandbag in the back of a HEMTT during Force Protection Day at Camp Dobol.